An Apostle to the Gentiles?

Paul Who Failed to Fully Grasp the Will of God

（By ChatGPT）

1.
It seems that Paul understood the calling of Abraham as a blessing given primarily to Abraham himself. However, when we read the account of Abraham's calling carefully, it appears rather to be only an introduction to the blessing of all nations and all humanity. In other words, Abraham's calling had as its ultimate purpose the blessing of all humankind.

The blessing of Israel was certainly something that had to take place, but it appears to have been something that occurred along the way—secondary to the greater purpose of the salvation of all humanity.

2.
Paul received revelation from God that the blessing of Israel and the giving of the Law were ultimately intended for the blessing of all humanity. Yet he was unable to overcome the fact that he had been raised within the proud lineage and culture of Israel, and further shaped by the elite education of a strict Pharisee.

He, too, could only understand the universal gospel of God within the framework of his own time and culture.

3.
Thus, Paul's understanding of the Savior—the Messiah—was fundamentally shaped through the written Law, that is, through the Law itself. As he himself stated, this understanding was one formed under the Law as a "guardian," and therefore belonged to the Jewish people.

It was different from the salvation of the Gentiles, who did not have such a guardian.

4.
Therefore, the very proposition that one is saved by believing in Jesus Christ is already, in essence, decisively Jewish in nature.

The salvation brought by Jesus Christ is indeed complete and perfect. Both the salvation of Israel and that of the Gentiles were accomplished through the perfection of His redemptive work. However, when viewed from the standpoint of the promise given to Abraham—the blessing of all humanity—something essential seems to be missing.

For the promise of blessing to the Gentiles was that they would receive it as Gentiles, without becoming Israelites.

5.
When Paul proclaimed, “A person is saved by faith in Jesus Christ alone,” and affirmed that “Abraham was justified by faith,” he came, for a moment, close to understanding God’s original purpose of salvation for the Gentiles.

Yet he stopped there. He did not reach the understanding that Gentiles would receive blessing while remaining Gentiles—that is, without becoming Israelites—which was God’s original intention.

6.
As a result, Paul continued to apply to Gentile mission the gospel intended for Jews—namely, that one is saved by believing in Jesus Christ alone. The teachings of the apostles who learned from and accepted his understanding of the gospel then became the core of Christianity thereafter.

7.
At one point, Paul shifted slightly from his central theme of “faith in Jesus Christ” and said, “Abraham was justified by faith.”

At that moment, he touched upon a righteousness that does not depend on faith in Jesus Christ.

8.
Paul surely understood that Abraham did not know Jesus Christ. Abraham's faith at that time was not directed toward Jesus Christ, but toward God the Father. Paul also understood that the Father and Christ are one, and that Christ was with Abraham.

9.
However, Paul deliberately avoided addressing the object of Abraham's faith. In doing so, he turned away from the crucial issue of what the object of faith for the Gentiles should be, and remained within the Jewish framework: faith in Jesus Christ, guided by the Law as a guardian.

10.
Thus, Paul not only misunderstood the true nature of Abraham's faith as a great Gentile, but also confused and ultimately overlooked the faith and its expressions among the Gentiles of his own time, earlier generations, and even those long before them—by interpreting everything through the pattern of Israel's faith.

11.
In this way, the path that God must have prepared—by which Gentiles could be saved while remaining Gentiles, without calling upon the name of the Savior of Israel—has remained closed until now.

12.
What, then, has become of the salvation of the Gentiles, who live without knowing the Law given to Israel or even the Creator God?

What has become of the salvation and blessing of those Gentiles who, without being given the Scriptures or the Law, have nevertheless come to this present age?

13.
Yet Paul was not an ordinary thinker like us. He was indeed a first-rate theologian. Even within the limitations or deficiencies of his theology, he left us with profound insights.

One of these is his reference to the “law written on the heart,” given even to those who had not received the Law—that is, to the Gentiles.

14.
What does it mean that Gentiles possess a law within themselves, that they are a law unto themselves? What is this “law written on the heart”?

As far as we can find in Scripture, the only fitting explanation is the statement that “human beings were created in the image of God.”

15.
This statement applies to all Homo sapiens without exception. It includes both Israelites and all Gentiles and carries a fundamentally universal meaning.

This must be the “law of the heart” to which Paul referred. It precedes the Law given to Israel as a guardian and functions as the primary principle that regulates and guides all human behavior.

16.
Especially for Gentiles, who were not given the Law as a guardian, this becomes the guiding principle for how to live as human beings.

Importantly, this original human nature—being created in the image of God—operates not first as intellectual capacity but as a kind of intuitive or sensory capacity. Before reasoning about what is good or right, it instinctively seeks what is good and points toward the proper course of action.

It is like a newborn infant instinctively seeking its mother’s breast without being taught.

17.
Thus, all humanity possesses an instinct to seek, revere, worship, and obey the Creator. Moreover, all people naturally honor others, value them, desire their well-being, and find joy in serving them.

Human beings, created in the image of God, are made to delight in loving one another, building relationships, helping each other, and living in cooperation—just as God Himself is love.

18.
Sadly, this original human nature, created in God’s image, has been damaged, cracked, distorted, and warped by sin. Yet sin has not completely destroyed it, nor has it erased it entirely. It still remains firmly within human nature.

19.
That is why, immediately after humanity sinned, God Himself was able to seek them, pursue them, and call out to them. God had already forgiven human sin in Christ from the beginning.

Even if a person does not know the name of Christ, does not know the cross, and does not know the meaning of repentance, God knows.

All people are saved through the redemptive work of Christ. There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

Therefore, we can say with certainty: the salvation of all Gentiles must be hidden somewhere within this reality.

20.
Yet sadly, within Paul’s theology of the Gentiles, this remains hidden. Gentiles are still taught that they cannot be saved unless they call upon the name of Jesus Christ. In other words, unless they accept the “guardian theology” given to Israel and call upon the name of Jesus Christ, they cannot be saved.

Thus, the promise given at Abraham’s calling—that Gentiles would be blessed as Gentiles—remains unfulfilled.